



TRANSPORTERS

VERIFY

- Verify inbound trucks for seal integrity, seal number, and shipping location.
- Examine incoming products and their containers for evidence of tampering or adulteration.
- Examine product labeling and packaging to make sure it is consistent with what is normally received.
- Develop a procedural checklist for incoming and outgoing shipments.
- Check food for unusual odor or appearance.
- Seal all outgoing shipments with tamper-evident, numbered seals and list on shipping documents.

REPORT

- In the event of a food defense emergency, contact your local law enforcement agency first.
- Develop an internal reporting system and request review by key management, who are trained to assess a food defense incident.
- Be aware of and report any suspicious activity to appropriate authorities (e.g., unscheduled maintenance, deliveries, or visitors should be considered suspicious).
- Trace forward: FSIS-regulated establishments, shippers, and carriers should have systems in place to quickly and effectively locate products that have been distributed to wholesalers and retailers.
- Trace backward: Retailers, wholesalers, carriers, and others who have received products from FSIS-regulated establishments should be able to identify the sources of the products quickly and efficiently.



RETAILERS & RESTAURANTS

PROTECT

- Prevent unauthorized access to food preparation and storage areas.
- Monitor self-serve food areas for evidence of tampering.
- Restrict access to compressor rooms.
- Check the entire facility where an intruder could remain unseen after work hours.
- Require delivery personnel to sign a logbook and present photo ID.
- Restrict access to chemical storage areas.
- Install backflow devices for water systems.
- Identify alternate sources for power and potable water during emergencies where these systems have been compromised.
- Ensure that trash dumpster lids are locked during non-working hours.
- Restrict access to air circulation systems.
- Keep roof hatches and receiving dock doors locked from the inside.
- Instruct employees on how to handle and report suspicious or threatening telephone calls or customer behavior.

CONTACTS

Significant Incident Preparedness and Response Staff (SIPRS) 24-Hour Emergency Response: 1-866-395-9701
SIPRS@usda.gov

Small Plant Help Desk: 1-877-374-7435
InfoSource@usda.gov

SIPRS Food Defense Support: 1-202-690-6523
FoodDefense@usda.gov

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline: 1-888-674-6854

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Headquarters 24-Hour Response: 1-202-324-3000

FSIS Office of Investigation, Enforcement and Audit
Regional Contact:

Local Police:

Sheriff:

Local FBI:

Local Fire Department:

Local Health Department:

State Health Department:

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Emergency Line:



FOOD SAFE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

Are you prepared for a food defense emergency?

For more food defense resources, go to:
<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/fooddefense>

January 2020

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Food Defense

AN EVOLVING THREAT LANDSCAPE

The food system within the United States continues to increase in complexity, diversity, and reliance upon interconnected domestic and global systems. Concurrently, the threat landscape and potential sources of intentional adulteration continue to evolve and increase in complexity, which could ultimately have a powerful impact on public health and the economy. Ensuring safe food from production to retail is vital to protecting public health. This guidance is designed to assist transporters, warehouses, distributors, retailers, and restaurants with enhancing their security measures to protect the food supply from contamination due to criminal or terrorist acts. We recognize that not all guidelines will be applicable or practical for every establishment.



GENERAL GUIDELINES

PLAN

- Identify a food defense management team.
- Develop a food defense plan for transportation and storage operations.
- Assess and identify vulnerable points of contamination. A flow diagram for your product's point of origin to its final destination, including all shipping modes and routes, can be a helpful tool in your assessment.



- Define and implement controls to prevent product contamination during transport and storage.
- Verify that contracted transporters (e.g., air, ground, maritime, rail) and storage/warehouse facilities have a security program in place.
- Have a system in place to identify and track your product during transportation or distribution (e.g., use of tamper-resistant seals corresponding to specific shipments and their documentation, use of a Global Positioning System, etc.).
- Consider including specific security measures in purchasing and transport contracts, and verify that those measures are being implemented.
- Develop and implement a food defense plan and train each team member in all provisions of the plan.
- Conduct drills regularly to test and verify the effectiveness of the plan.
- Review plan policies and procedures at least annually.



SCREEN AND EDUCATE

- Conduct appropriate background and criminal checks and verify references on all potential employees (including contract, temporary, custodial, security, and seasonal workers).
- Any personnel without background checks should be under constant supervision, and their access to sensitive areas of the facility should be restricted.
- Provide training for employees on food defense practices and on how to remain vigilant.

Your food defense plan should include:

- Procedures for handling threats or actual cases of product tampering.
- Procedures for safe handling, separation, and disposal of contaminated products.
- Procedures for evacuation of the facility.
- Methods to check and document condition of product and packaging upon receipt.
- Policy and procedures for rejection of suspicious packages and products.
- Procedures for accepting deliveries after hours.
- Updated list of contacts for local, State, Federal, Homeland Security, and public health officials.
- Procedures to notify appropriate authorities if a suspicious event occurs.
- Map of locations of entry and exit points available to emergency personnel.
- Strategy for communicating with the media (e.g., spokesperson, press statements).



- Promote ongoing security consciousness and the importance of security procedures.
- Train appropriate personnel in security procedures for delivery of incoming mail, supplies, and equipment.
- Encourage employees to report any suspicious activities or behavior, such as signs of possible product tampering.
- Ensure employees know emergency procedures and contact information.

SECURE

- Escort visitors at all times and require a positive identification (ID) system for all employees at your facility.
- Collect company-issued IDs and keys, and change lock combinations when an employee is no longer employed by the company.
- Secure and restrict access to facilities, vehicles, locker rooms, and all storage areas (e.g., with alarms, cameras, locks, fences, etc.).
- Designate specific entry and exit points for people and vehicles.
- Secure all access and exit doors, vent openings, windows, outside refrigeration and storage units, trailers, and bulk storage tanks.
- Secure and restrict access to water supply and air flow systems.
- Ensure adequate lighting in perimeter areas.
- Handle incoming mail in an area of the facility that is separate from food handling, storage, or preparation areas.

MONITOR

- Monitor employees for unusual behavior (e.g., staying unusually late, arriving unusually early, taking pictures of the establishment, or removing company documents from the facility).
- Purchase all food ingredients, food products, and packaging materials only from known, reputable suppliers. Require letters of guarantee, if possible.
- Require advance notification from suppliers for all incoming deliveries, including shipment details, driver's name, and seal numbers.
- Require locked or sealed vehicles for delivery.
- Review the shipping documents to ensure they are consistent with the order, and only accept the number of cases indicated.
- Do not accept products known or suspected of being adulterated.



- Require a supervisor or other agent of the owner to break seals and sign the trucker's log book, noting on the bill of lading any problems with the condition of the product.
- Document the broker, seal numbers, and truck or trailer number.
- Have a system in place to ensure the integrity of product when the seal will need to be broken prior to delivery due to multiple deliveries or for inspection by government officials.
- Supervise off-loading of incoming products, ingredients, packaging, labels, and product returns.